

"She'll be too old to marry him before he gets a raise," growled Moss. "And if they do marry we'll know where the money comes from."

Five, six, seven years passed. The detectives were less obtrusive now, but they still followed Jim Fleming. He was still liable to return home to find that some one had tampered with his desk or trunk. He knew that Moss was a bloodhound but he did not know that Moss had conceived a stubborn admiration for the man he regarded as the most successful criminal of the age.

"Jim, dear, I have saved up \$1,000," said Myra one day. "Let us be married anyway."

He shook his head grimly. He would not marry her until the bank had officially pronounced the stain upon his character wiped away. He had often urged Myra to release him. But she refused to do so.

"I'll stand by you till the end, dear," she answered.

By this time the directors had come to waver in their opinion of Jim. Traps had been laid for him, opportunities placed in his way. He evaded them and did not seem to recognize them. He still remained paying teller. His salary should have been \$1,750. The bank was making \$1,000 a year out of him. Half that money went to the detective agency, but still Jim had almost made up the missing money.

The town was growing. At last it was decided to build a new bank. It had outgrown its limited premises. A magnificent structure of marble was going up. New desks and counters had already been installed and on the day when the papers and money were removed the old fixtures would be turned over to the junk man.

Everything was ready at last. The manager was superintending the removal of the money. Old Moss stood grimly by, watching the ceremony. Jim opened his drawer, which he had pulled out and closed so many thousands of times during the course of

his service in the bank. He took out the bills and packages of coins and handed them to the manager, who counted them and placed them in the safe, which stood in the main office, ready for removal.

The drawer had stuck—for the first time in all those years. Jim pulled it out half way. It would come out no further.

Moss, seeing him tugging, strolled up. The manager was looking at him. From her seat at her typewriter Jim saw Myra looking at him. He tugged and tugged, and the drawer would not budge.

It was astonishing what electricity there seemed to be in the atmosphere. Somehow everybody felt that this incident of the drawer sticking had an important bearing upon the situation with regard to Jim. Vague suspicions, borne in the minds of all, began to crystalize. Jim felt himself growing red. He pulled with all his might.

Suddenly he was lying upon his back, with the empty, broken drawer upon his chest, and the old counter broken into half a dozen pieces.

It had stood for so many years that it had grown as dry as tinder from the steam heat, and now, as if protesting at its being consigned to the junk shop, had yielded up its life in a final protest against being discarded.

Suddenly the manager utter an exclamation and stooped down. From a crevice he extracted three new \$1,000 bills. He held them up significantly. Moss came forward. Jim got up and stood staring at them speechlessly. Then, with a cry, Myra ran from her place and flung her arms around Jim and stood facing them all with love and defiance upon her face.

It was easy to see what had happened. The three bills had slipped back when the drawer was opened and had lodged at the back in a crevice of the counter. Jim's hands must have wandered above them a score of times a day and he had never guessed,